

News Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Space Still Available for Behind-the-Scenes Guided Walks at Año Nuevo State Reserve

Travel into the sand dunes while thousands of elephant seals are ashore to rest, mate, and give birth at the spectacular Año Nuevo State Reserve rookery. **On Saturday, January 26, 2002**, the California State Parks Association, the San Mateo Coast Natural History Association, and California State Parks host **Sealabration**, a special behind-the-scenes fundraising event to support the educational and interpretive programs at Año Nuevo State Reserve and other State Parks of the San Mateo County coast.

Participants will be **escorted by bus to the elephant seal rookery**, where docent naturalists will lead a special guided walk. Amid more than 3,000 elephant seals, visitors may witness fights between 3-ton males; births of pups who will quadruple their weight within a month on their diet of rich mother's milk; and mating.

Complimentary lunch is served in the Visitor Center from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Space is still available for walks departing 12:30 p.m.-2:30 p.m.

- Donation is \$75, of which \$55 is tax-deductible.
- You can make reservations toll free at 866-667-SEAL (7325) (please credit card information).

Año Nuevo State Reserve is located on State Route 1, between Santa Cruz and Half Moon Bay, about 1.5 hours south of San Francisco.

Northern elephant seals, once hunted to the brink of extinction for their blubber, have made a large comeback along their Pacific Coastal range. Elephant seals returned to Año Nuevo in the sixties and began giving birth on the mainland beaches in 1975. Over 1,500 pups were born in the rookery last year. Elephant seals spend much of the year at sea, diving to depths of almost one mile beneath the surface on dives that can last over one hour.

Equal Access: Guided walks are available for special need groups such as the physically



challenged. Requests must be made when reservations are placed.